

We have seen the Sultan^a several times. He affects all the affable activity of a European prince, mixes with his subjects, interferes in all their pursuits, and taxes them most unmercifully. He dresses like a European, and all the young men have adopted the fashion. You see young Turks in uniforms which would not disgrace one of our crack cavalry regiments, and lounging with all the bitterness of Royal illegitimates. It is on the rising generation that the Sultan depends, and, if one may form an opinion, not in vain. After all his defeats, he has now 60,000 regular infantry excellently appointed and well disciplined. They are certainly not to be compared to French or English line, but they would as certainly beat the Spanish and the Dutch, and many think, with fair play, the Eussian. Fair play their monarch certainly had not during the last campaign; the secret history would not now interest, but it was by other means than military prowess that the Muscovites advanced so successfully. The Sultan had to struggle against an unprecedented conspiracy the whole time, and the morning that Adrianople was treacherously delivered up, the streets of Stamboul were filled with dead bodies of detected traitors.²

He lingered there for more than a month, lounging daily in the shop of 'Mustapha the Imperial perfumer,' attending 'masquerade balls and diplomatic dinners,' and leading a life of rapturous, but far from inattentive, indolence. The Ambassador, a brother of Lord Aberdeen's, received him 'with a kindness which lie should always remember with, gratitude'; though in a game of forfeits one day his Excellency showed so little respect for the Oriental gravity which his guest was anxious to cultivate as to make him 'tumble over head and heels. Can you conceive anything more dreadful?' 'My health, improved, but my desire of wandering increased. I began to think that I should now never be able to settle in life. The desire of fame did not revive. I felt no intellectual energy; I required nothing more than to be amused.' This was Contarini's mood during his stay iii the 'Capital of the East,' and Disraeli's seems to have been not very different. 'All,' as he wrote to Mrs.

¹ Mahrnud II., destroyer of the Janissaries.

² *Letters*, pp. 63-55.